

PRODUCTION HEATS UP WITH BETTER AUTOMATION,
CYBERSECURITY

ABOUT CALIENTE, LLC. Calienté LLC provides high quality, innovative heating solutions to help businesses lower costs. Based in Fort Wayne, Indiana, with around 25 employees, Calienté offers both custom and standard parts, utilizing a worldwide set of design and supply partners. Five years ago, Calienté made the strategic decision to apply its innovative thermal expertise to products for the US Department of Defense (DoD). Today, it is one of the leading suppliers of thermal target systems to the US military.

THE CHALLENGE. When Calienté began supplying products to the DoD, the company faced two challenges. One was to automate data processing to save costs and improve quality control, and the other was to meet cybersecurity requirements for defense contractors. The company turned to the Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership, part of the MEP National Network™, for assistance with both issues.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Purdue MEP partnered with Purdue University Fort Wayne and the Indiana Next Generation Manufacturing Competitiveness (IN-Mac) program to identify new competitive technology for Calienté. A professor of electrical and computer engineering technology from Purdue University, along with a Purdue PhD student, worked on automating the company's antiquated data processing system. Previously, different systems in the back had their own separate server. With Purdue MEP's assistance, the company rewrote all the programs and linked them to one server in the front office.

The technology adoption project enabled automated data logging on the manufacturing floor, and integrated solutions for work-in-process to improve part tracking. It streamlined operations, improved quality control, and led to an increase in sales. The company is using more automation without losing employees, and is more efficient. "It has helped us troubleshoot much better when we have a problem," said James Blake, director of engineering for Calienté. "It's saved us countless hours, and the great thing is that now we can write our own programs for doing that."

Next, Purdue MEP connected Calienté with industry leading experts in cybersecurity to provide a detailed gap analysis of the company's protocols and procedures according to DoD requirements. Together, they mapped out a detailed action plan on the steps needed to be DFARS (Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement) compliant, as well as the tools to manage the project effectively and efficiently. The cybersecurity compliance project protected one quarter of the company's business revenue and averted operational losses in money and client goodwill that could have resulted from an information breach.

"Purdue MEP has been very helpful, especially since we're a small business. It means a lot to have that resource available to us. We always feel like we're punching up."

-Mike Kelly, President

RESULTS



Increased sales by **\$150,000**



Protected **25%** of business revenue from DoD



Retained jobs while utilizing automation to improve efficiency

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